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SUBJECT: SIXTH COMMITTEE INFORMALLY DISCUSSES RULE OF LAW

REF: A. STATE 2298  
B. STATE 182849

**¶1.** (SBU) BEGIN SUMMARY: The Chairman of the General Assembly's Sixth (Legal) Committee convened informal consultations of the Committee on March 29 to exchange views on ways to focus the Committee's debate under the new rule of law agenda item. Delegations recommended that the Committee focus on concrete, action-oriented sub-topics, and several delegations supported sub-topics on capacity building and technical assistance. END SUMMARY.

**¶2.** (SBU) The Chairman, former Mexican Deputy Perm Rep, Gomez Robledo, opened the meeting by explaining that he hoped the discussion would generate ideas for possible sub-topics on which the Sixth Committee could focus its rule of law discussions in the future. He said he would brief the new Chairman (who will take office in June) and hoped the Committee members' informal proposals would help the next Chairman select one or two sub-topics for the Committee's discussions. Paragraph 5 of GA resolution 61/39 "recommends that, as from the 62nd session and after consultations among Member States, the Sixth Committee annually choose one or two sub-topics to facilitate a focused discussion for the subsequent session" (ref A).

**¶3.** (U) Several delegations, including Germany (on behalf of the EU), USUN, Pakistan, and New Zealand, welcomed the Committee's new agenda item on the rule of law but supported narrowing the Committee's discussion to one or two concrete sub-topics. A number of delegations, including Germany (on behalf of the EU), USUN, Egypt, New Zealand, Indonesia, and Guatemala, also cautioned that the Committee should avoid duplication of discussions occurring in other UN bodies.

**¶4.** (SBU) USUN, per ref B, suggested that the Committee could focus constructively on ways in which existing UN activities and strategies for technical assistance related to the rule of law might be better coordinated and made more effective. Similarly, South Africa, on behalf of the African Group, expressed its strong support for a focus on capacity building and technical assistance. Other delegations, including Liechtenstein, Pakistan, Egypt, Malaysia, Morocco, Indonesia, and the Sudan, concurred and voiced support for these two sub-topics.

**¶5.** (SBU) Germany (on behalf of the EU) proposed a focus on strengthening criminal justice at the international and national levels. Similarly, New Zealand suggested that the Committee focus on international criminal justice, including the legacy issues that will arise as international and hybrid criminal courts and tribunals complete their work.

**¶6.** (U) In concluding, the Chairman said he would draft a paper for the new Chairman summarizing Committee members' comments. He suggested that the new Chairman might consider inviting the new head of the Secretariat's rule of law

assistance unit to brief the Committee next fall.  
WOLFF